Resource Packet

Assessment of Speech: Voice



VOICE SEVERITY RATING SCALE

Determination of Speech Impairment: Voice

Student Schoo	I Grade	Date of Rating DOB	_Age SLT		
Pitch	0 Pitch is within normal limits.	1 There is a noticeable difference, which may be intermittent.	3 There is a persistent, noticeable inappropriate raising or lowering of pitch for age and sex.		
Intensity	. O Intensity is within normal limits.	1 There is a noticeable difference in intensity, which may be intermittent.	There is persistent, noticeable, inappropriate increase or decrease in the intensity of speech or the presence of aphonia.		
Quality	0 Quality is within normal limits.	1 There is a noticeable difference in quality, which may be intermittent.	There is persistent, noticeable, breathiness, glottaltry, harshness, hoarseness, tenseness, stridency or other abnormal quality.		
Resonance	0 Nasality is within normal limits.	1 There is a noticeable difference in nasality, which may be intermittent.	3 There is persistent, noticeable cul de sac, hyper or hyponasality, or mixed nasality.		
nstructions: 1. Do not include regional or dialectal differences when scoring. 2. Circle the score for the most appropriate description for each category, i.e., Pitch or Intensity. 3. Compute the total score and record below. 4. Circle the total score on the bar/scale below. 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12					
	Moderate ta, this student scores in the Mild, Moderate of adverse effects of the Voice disorder on	to Severe or Severe range Voice Disorder.	TOTAL SCORE		

Determination of eligibility as a student with a Speech and/or Language Impairment is made by the IEP Team.

Assessment Guidelines for Speech - Voice

VOICE ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS

There are multiple aspects to consider when evaluating voice impairments:

- pitch,
- loudness, and
- quality including resonance.

Many disorders of voice or resonance have an organic etiology with a related medical history. Other disorders are functionally based, caused by "faulty usage" or behavioral histories. For assessment and instructional purposes, classifying voice disorders by vocal behaviors or symptoms provides the most useful information for the Speech-Language Therapist (SLT). Boone and McFarlane (1988) suggest that "Patients with voice quality and resonance problems generally require some medical evaluation of the ears, nose, and throat as part of the total voice evaluation... A laryngeal examination must be made before a patient can begin voice therapy for problems related to quality or resonance...Voice therapy efforts should be deferred until a medical examination (which would include laryngoscopy) is concluded, because there are occasional laryngeal pathologies, such as papilloma or carcinoma, for which voice therapy would be strongly contraindicated. In such cases, the delay of accurate diagnosis of these pathologies could be life-threatening (pp. 104-105)." No child should be enrolled for voice therapy without prior otolaryngological examination. However, the presence of a medical condition (e.g., vocal nodules) does not necessitate the provision of voice therapy as a disability requiring special education – nor does a prescription for voice therapy from a physician.

CONDUCTING A SPEECH EVALUATION FOR VOICE

- Conduct hearing and vision screenings.
- Obtain relevant information from the parents (i.e., concerns about communication skills, developmental history, etc).
- Information must be gathered from two educators the student's classroom teacher
 as well as another professional. For preschoolers, obtain information from child care
 providers and other adults who see the child outside the family structure.
- Obtain information from teachers related to progress in the general curriculum, communication skills, behavior, and social interactions. General curriculum for preschoolers is developmentally appropriate activities.
- Review school records (e.g., grades, test scores, special education file, documentation of prereferral strategies/interventions, and discipline and attendance records).
- Complete an oral-peripheral examination.
- Obtain medical report from an Otolaryngologist.
- Collect a representative sample of the student's speech.
- Analyze voice, pitch, intensity and quality.

- Document how the student's voice impairment adversely affects the student's educational performance in the general education classroom or the learning environment. For preschoolers, document how the voice dysfunction adversely affects their ability to participate in developmentally appropriate activities.
- Complete the Voice Severity Rating Scale.
- Finalize and submit to the IEP team a Speech and Language Evaluation Report.

INTERPRETING AND REPORTING EVALUATION RESULTS

Several checklists are available to report findings. For more detailed information regarding procedures for assessing fundamental frequency/habitual pitch, breathing patterns and breath support, and the s/z ratio for respiratory/phonatory efficiency, refer to <u>Assessment in Speech-Language Pathology: A Resource Manual</u> (Shipley and McAffee, 1998). Procedures for the identification of resonance problems including hypernasality, hyponasality and assimilation nasality, and assessment of velopharyngeal functioning can be found in this resource packet as well. The impairment must not be related to unresolved upper respiratory infection or allergies that are not being actively treated by a physician.

USING THE VOICE SEVERITY RATING SCALE

The *Voice Severity Rating Scale* is to be used as a tool after conducting a complete assessment of the student's voice. The scale is designed to assist the examiner with interpretation and documentation of the results of voice assessment findings in terms of severity (pitch, intensity, quality and resonance). This scale is not a diagnostic instrument and should not be used in the absence of assessment data.

In order to be identified as a student with a Speech Impairment with voice difficulties, the severity of voice dysfunction must be determined to have an "adverse effect on educational performance." The rating scale serves three purposes:

- 1) to document the presence of voice dysfunction and to what extent (Mild, Moderate, Severe),
- 2) to indicate the absence or presence of adverse effects on educational performance, and
- 3) to determine whether or not the student meets eligibility standards for a speech impairment in voice.

"Educational performance" refers to the student's ability to participate in the educational process and must include consideration of the student's social, emotional, academic, and vocational performance. The presence of voice dysfunction does not automatically indicate an adverse effect on the student's ability to function within the educational setting. The voice dysfunction must be shown to interfere with the student's ability to perform in the educational setting before a disability is determined. The effect on educational performance is, therefore, best determined through classroom observation, consultation with classroom teachers and other special educators, and interviews with parents and the student. Teacher checklists are useful for determining how the voice dysfunction affects educational performance.

Parent Release of Information

Name:

Scho	e of Birth: ool: e Sent:
Dear Parent or Guardian:	
Your child's teacher has expressed concerns Tennessee State Rules and Regulations for Sassessment shall include an examination by should be seen by an Otolaryngologist.	Special Education programs, a voice
Please take the enclosed forms and informat	ion to the doctor with your
1. copy of this letter, and	
medical response form with the attach system.	ned envelope addressed to the school
The medical form is to be filled out by the doc determine appropriate follow-up services. In written permission is required so that the sch from your doctor. Please sign on the line ind child's doctor.	order to comply with federal law, your ool system can receive information
Parent's Signature	
I, release information about my child's voice me school system.	, permit my physician to echanism examination to the
	Sincerely,
	Speech/Language Therapist

Physician Signature Form

Name_		Date Sent		
Addres	s	Birth Date		
Parents	S	Telephone		
School				
The about Tennes assess	see's <i>Elig</i> ment shal fill in the f	ed student is suspected to have a voice problem. In accordance with gibility Standards for Speech/Language Impairments, a voice I include an examination by an Otolaryngologist. After your examination, following information to assist in determining if voice therapy would be		
Medica	l diagnosi	s:		
I.	Nose:	Obstruction? If so, explain		
II.	Palate:	Structural abnormalities?		
III.	Pharynx:	Asymmetry of muscle contraction? Growth(s) or other abnormalities?		
IV.	Larynx:	Size normal for age and sex? Do vocal folds approximate properly during phonation? Evidence of muscle tension during phonation? Color of vocal folds normal? Visible scars? Growths? Other pathologies?		
Does pa	itient have al vocal qu	allergies, sinus infections, or other chronic conditions, which might contribute to ality?		
		suse of voice have contributed to abnormal structure or function?		
Do your	findings e	xplain the abnormal vocal quality?		
Do you recommend surgery? Medication?				
Do you	recommen	d voice therapy with a trained speech-language pathologist?		
Other re	commend	ations:		
Please i	return to:			

Speech: Voice Resource Packet

Voice Evaluation

(for Otolaryngologist)

STUDENT NAME	DATE OF BIRTH
DATE OF REPORT	DATE SENTAGE
According to Tennessee State Rules are voice assessment shall include an example.	is suspected to have a voice problem. de Regulations for Special Education programs, a mination by an Otolaryngologist. The information component for the assessment of voice impairment.
describe briefly.) Nose Lips Jaw Tongue Palate Pharynx Ears Teeth Other No structural or functional abnotate appearance of the vocal companies and the structural or functional abnotate appearance of the vocal companies and the structural or functional abnotate appearance of the vocal companies and the structural or functional abnotate appearance of the vocal companies and the structural or functional abnotate appearance of the vocal companies and the structural or functional abnotate appearance of the vocal companies and the structural or functional abnotate appearance of the vocal companies and the structural or functional abnotate appearance of the vocal companies and the structural or functional abnotate appearance of the vocal companies and the structural or functional abnotate appearance of the vocal companies and the structural or functional abnotate appearance of the vocal companies and the structural or functional abnotate appearance of the vocal companies and the structural or functional abnotate appearance of the vocal companies and the structural or functional abnotate appearance of the vocal companies and the structural or functional abnotate appearance of the vocal companies and the structural or functional abnotate appearance of the vocal companies and the structural or functional abnotate appearance and the structural or functional abnotate and the structural or functional abno	
3. Is there presence of vocal pathology?Vocal nodulesPolypsUlcersNone	
	s:
	e or modify voice problems through speech therapy. Do r kind of speech therapy?
Otolaryngologist's Name (Print)	Date
Otolaryngologist's Signature	

Teacher Input - Voice

Student		e	
Tea	ident Dat acher Grade/Program		
You edu	r observations of the above student's speech will help determine if s/he has a voice cational performance. Please answer all questions and return this form to	problem which adverse	ely affects
	·	Yes	No
1.	Is this student able to project loudly enough to be adequately heard in your classroom during recitations?		
2.	Does this student avoid reading out loud in class?		
3.	Does this student appear generally to avoid talking in your classroom?		
4.	Does this student ever lose his or her voice by the end of the school day?		
5.	Does this student use an unusually loud voice or shout a great deal in your classroom?		
6.	Does this student engage in an excessive amount of throat clearing or		
	coughing? If so, which? If so, how does it appear to disturb the other students, (e.g., their		
	concentration, listening)?		
7.	Is this student's voice quality worse during any particular time of the day? If so, when?		
8.	Does this student's voice quality make it difficult to understand the content of his or her speech?		
9.	Does this student's voice quality in itself distract you from what s/he is saying?		
10.	Has this student ever mentioned to you that s/he thinks s/he has a voice problem?	·	
11.	Have you ever heard any of his/her peers mention his/her voice sounds funny or actually make fun of this student because of his/her voice problem?		
12.	If this student has a pitch that is too low or too high, does his/her pitch make it difficult to identify him/her as male or female just by listening?		
13.	During speaking, does this student's voice break up or down in pitch to the extent that s/he appears to be embarrassed by this?		
	YES □ NO It is my opinion that these behaviors adversely affect the stud	lent's educational ne	rformance
	es, provide explanation:	ioni o oddodiionai po	, romanoc
,	ee, provide explanation:		
Tea	acher's Signature	Date	
Ada	pted from Speech and Language Services in Michigan: Suggestions for Identification	on. Delivery of Service a	and Exit

Adapted from *Speech and Language Services in Michigan*: Suggestions for Identification, Delivery of Service and Exit Criteria, edited by Elizabeth Loring Lockwood and Kathleen Pistano. East Lansing: The Michigan Speech-Language-Hearing Association, 1991.

Voice Evaluation Worksheets

Child	DOB	Date SLT _	
School	Teacher		Grade
Record areas assessed. The assess that arise during the evaluation. Are			d in the referral and those
Voice Area	Impairment	Evidence	Adverse Effects on Educational Performance
PHONATION			
Isolation			
Total Pitch Range			
Optimum Pitch			
Pitch Appropriateness for Age			
Pitch Appropriateness for Sex			
Loudness Range			
Aphonia			
Breathiness			
Diplophonia			
Glottal Fry			
Hoarseness			
Harshness			

Tremor

Voice Area	Impairment	Evidence	Adverse Effects on Educational Performance
PHONATION (cont'd)			
Connected Speech	-		
Voice Onset			
Voiceless to Voiced			
Appropriateness of Loudness			
Pitch Breaks			
Pitch Range			
Habitual Pitch			
Aphonia			
Breathiness			
Diplophonia			
Glottal Fry			
Hoarseness			
Harshness			
Tremor			
RESONANCE IN CONNECTED SPEECH			
Hypernasality			
Hyponasality			
Throatiness/Cul De Sac			
Nasal Emission			
Assimilation Nasality			

Child	Date	

Voice Area	Impairment	Evidence	Adverse Effects on Educational Performance
PROSODY IN CONNECTED			
SPEECH			
Stress			
Intonation			
RESPIRATION			
Type of Breathing Pattern	-		
At rest			
In Connected Speech			
Breath Support for Speech			
Posture			
Tension			
ASSOCIATED FACTORS			
Vocal Abuse Behaviors			
Personality Factors			
ORAL MECHANISM			
Structure			
Function/Tension			
OTL EXAMINATION RESULTS			1

Vocal Characteristics Checklist¹

Name:		Age:	_Date:
Examiner:			
Instructions: Check ead additional comments on t			and indicate severity. Make
1 = mild	2 = moderate	3 = severe	
Pitch		Comm	ents
too high			
too low			
monotone			
limited variation			
excessive variation_			
pitch breaks			
diplophonia			
Loudness			
too loud			
too soft or quiet			
monoloudness			
limited variation			
excessive variation_			
Phonatory-Based Quali	ty		
breathy voice			
shrill voice			
strident voice			

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 $^{^{\}rm 1}$ Assessment in Speech-Language Pathology 1998 by Singular Publishing Group.

Phonatory-Based Quality (continued)

Comments ___ harsh voice_____ ___ hoarse voice_____ quivering voice tremor in the voice ___ weak voice___ ___ loss of voice_____ ___ glottal fry____ **Nasal Resonance** ___ hypernasal___ ___ nasal emission_ ___ assimilation nasality_____ ____ hypernasal (denasal)_____ **Oral Resonance** ___ cul-de-sac_____ ___ chesty____ ___ thin, babyish voice___ Other ____ reverse phonation_____ ___ progressively weakening voice____ aggressive personality factors_____ ____ breathing through the mouth_____ ___ hard glottal attacks____ ____ inadequate breath support_____ ___ throat clearing___ ____ disordered intonational patterns_____ ___ disordered stress patterns_____

Vocally Abusive Behaviors Checklist¹

Name:	Age	:	_Date:	
Examiner:				
Instructions: Have the studer comments column on the right-l				. Use the
1 = never 2 = infrequently	3 = occasionally 4 = frequently	5 =	always	
		Comm	ents	
alcohol consumption				
arcade talking				
arguing with peers, siblir	ngs, others			
athletic activity involving	yelling			_
breathing through the mo	outh			
caffeine products used (coffee, chocolate, etc	.)		
calling others from a dist	ance			
cheerleading or pep square	ad participation			
coughing or sneezing lou	udly			
crying	•			
dairy products used				
debate team participation				
environmental irritants ex				
grunting during exercise				
inhalants used frequently	_			
laughing hard and abusiv	veiy			

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 $^{^{\}rm 1}$ Assessment in Speech-Language Pathology 1998 by Singular Publishing Group.

Comments

participation in plays
singing in an abusive manner
smoking
speeches presented
talking loudly during menstrual periods
talking loudly during respiratory infections
talking for extended periods of time
talking in noisy environments
talking in smoky environments
talking while in the car
teaching or instructing
telephone used frequently
vocalizing toy or animal noises
vocalizing under muscular tension
yelling or screaming
other

Vocal Self-Perception: Attitudinal Questionnaire

1.	. Do you ever think about your voice?				No	No Opinion	
2.	Have you ever heard your voice on tape playback (e.g., on cassette recorder, answering machine)?			Yes	No	No Opinion	
3.	Did you like your voice on tape playback?			Yes	No	No Opinion	
4.	Has anyone ever commented on your voice?			Yes	No	No Opinion	
	If Yes, what was said?					•	
5.	Do you think your voice represents your image of yourself (masculine, feminine, intelligent, educated, friendly, etc.)?		nage of yourself , friendly, etc.)?	Yes	No	No Opinion	
	If Yes or No, in wi	hat way?					
6.	Do any of your friends, male or female, have voices that you especially like?			Yes	No	No Opinion	
			-				
7.	7. Do any of your friends, male or female, have voices that you especially dislike?			Yes	No	No Opinion	
	If Yes, explain						
8.	Does your voice sound like that of any other member of your family? If Yes, explain.			Yes	No	No Opinion	
9.		pelow that describe your eral (either on tape repla					
	pleasant	too soft	too loud	Add	Add any other terms that may describe your voice.		
	sexy	high-pitched	strong				
	raspy	low-pitched	thin				
	hoarse	grow	whiney				
	harsh	too fast	interesting				
	shrill	too slow	resonant				
	squeaky	weak	masculine				
	monotonous	breathy	feminine				
	nasal	weak	resonant				
	mumble	clear	expressive				
	husky		average				

Voice Conservation Index for Children¹

CH	HILD'S INITIALS	AGE _	SEX _	DATE				
Please circle the answer that is best.								
1.	When I get a cold	d, my voice gets hoars	e.					
	All the time	Most of the time	Half the time	Once in a while Never				
2.	After cheering at	a ballgame, I get hoar	se.					
	All the time	Most of the time	Half the time	Once in a while Never				
3.								
	All the time	Most of the time	Half the time	Once in a while Never				
4.	When I'm in a noisy situation, I speak very loudly.							
	All the time	Most of the time	Half the time	Once in a while Never				
5.	5. When I'm at home or at school, I spend a lot of time talking every day.							
	All the time	Most of the time	Half the time	Once in a while Never				
6.	I like to talk to pe	ople who are far away	from me.					
	All the time	Most of the time	Half the time	Once in a while Never				
7.	When I play outsi	ide with my friends, I y	ell a lot.					
	All the time	Most of the time	Half the time	Once in a while Never				
8.								
	All the time	Most of the time	Half the time	Once in a while Never				
9. People tell me I talk too loudly.								
	All the time	Most of the time	Half the time	Once in a while Never				
10.	People tell me I r	never stop talking.						
	All the time	Most of the time	Half the time	Once in a while Never				
11.	I like to talk.							
	All the time	Most of the time	Half the time	Once in a while Never				
12.	. I talk on the phon	ie.						
	All the time	Most of the time	Half the time	Once in a while Never				
13.	At home, I talk to	people who are in and	other room.					
	All the time	Most of the time	Half the time	Once in a while Never				
14.	I like to make car	or other noises when	I play.					
	All the time	Most of the time	Half the time	Once in a while Never				
15.	I like to sing.							
	All the time	Most of the time	Half the time	Once in a while Never				
16. People don't listen to me unless I talk loudly.								
	All the time	Most of the time	Half the time	Once in a while Never				
Sou	ırce: Saniga, R.I	D. and Carlin. M.F. "Vocal A	buse Behaviors in Yo	oung Children". Language, Speech,				

Source: Saniga, R.D. and Carlin, M.F. "Vocal Abuse Behaviors in Young Children". Language, Speech, and Hearing Services in Schools, 1993: 24 (2), p. 83. Reprinted by ASHA with permission of authors...

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¹ Saniga and Carlin (1991)